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Message Text

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ACTION STR-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-11 IO-13
ISO-00 STRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 EB-08 FRB-03 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 L-03
LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15
ITC-01 TRSE-00 ICA-11 SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01 DOE-15
/167 W
----------005740 030908Z /21
P 030845Z MAY 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9134
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 06694

USMTN
ACTION STR
PASS AGRICULTURE
STR PASS CODEL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MTN, ETRD
SUBJECT: CONCERN ABOUT PENDING US MEAT LEGISLATION

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT BY AUSTRALIAN DELEGATE (AMB FOGARTY) AT MEETING OF MTN SUBGROUP ON MEAT, MAY 1, 1978.

2. BEGIN TEXT. AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THIS SUB-GROUP, AUSTRALIA HAS STATED ITS OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS ON MEAT. THEY ARE, SIMPLY THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TOKYO DECLARATION WHICH SET IN TRAIN THE CURRENT ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS - THE PROGRESSIVE DISMANTLING OF OBSTACLES AND DISTORTIONS TO TRADE AND IMPROVEMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONDUCT OF WORLD
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TRADE. AUSTRALIA'S PROPOSAL WITH RESPECT TO THE WORK OF THIS SUB-GROUP AS WELL AS OUR BELIEF - ENDORSED BY THE SUB-GROUP LAST OCTOBER - WAS THAT BILATERAL ACCESS DISCUSSIONS SHOULD PROCEED IN PARALLEL WITH MULTILATERAL DISCUSSIONS. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE LIBERALISATION OBJECTIVES OF THIS ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS.

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AUSTRALIA HAS, ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS IN RECENT YEARS, DRAWN THE ATTENTION OF THE SUB-GROUP TO OUR CONCERN ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORLD MEAT TRADE SINCE 1974. WE HAVE SPARED NO EFFORT TO REGISTER, IN PARTICULAR, HOW THE IMPORT BARRIERS ERECTED SINCE 1974 SUDDENLY DISRUPTED THE LIVELIHOODS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN RURAL AUSTRALIA AND IN OTHER EXPORTING COUNTRIES. WE HAVE ATTEMPTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE THRUST OF OUR INITIATIVES IN THIS SUB-GROUP, AS IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA, IS TO BRING ABOUT, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE AND WITH THE MINIMUM DELAY, ASSURED AND STABLE ACCESS FOR SIGNIFICANT-LY INCREASED QUANTITIES OF BEEF THROUGH THE REDUCTION OF TARIFFS AND MORE IMPORTANTLY NON-TARIFF BARRIERS TO TRADE.

SADLY, EFFORTS TO DATE HAVE YIELDED LITTLE OR NO RESULT. DESPITE THE DESPERATE PLIGHT OF MEAT EXPORTERS, NO SIGNI-FICANT ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO OPEN UP MARKETS FOR MORE THAN THE MOST MODEST QUANTITIES. DESPITE LAST OCTOBER'S AGREEMENT THAT THE URGENT PROBLEMS CONCERNED WITH ACCESS SHOULD BE DEALT WITH THROUGH BILATERAL NE-GOTIATIONS UNDER THE REQUEST/OFFER PROCEDURE AND IN PARALLEL WITH THE IMPORTANT BUT ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT DISCUSSIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENT, THERE IS NO SIGN OF PROGRESS ON THE BILATERAL FRONT. RATHER ALL EFFORTS TO ENGAGE THE VITAL BILATERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

DISCUSSIONS HAVE RESULTED IN FRUSTRATION. NOT ONE PARTICIPANT IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITH WHOM WE HAVE HAD BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS IN GENEVA HAS SHOWN ANY REAL SIGN OF WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ON OUR NON-TARIFF REQUESTS. SOME IMPORTING COUNTRIES HAVE INSISTED THAT DISCUSSIONS ON A MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT MUST TAKE PRECE-DENCE OVER BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WOULD BE SUB-SUMED UNDER THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT. OTHERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THE PROBLEMS OF ACCESS ARE "TOO HARD" AND HAVE SOUGHT DEFERMENT OF DISCUSSIONS. INDEED WE HAVE THE SITUATION IN THE UNITES STATES WHERE THERE IS NOW ONE IMPORTANT PROPOSAL BEFORE CONGRESS IN AN ADVANCED STAGE OF CONSIDERATION WHICH IF INTRODUCED INTO LAW WOULD HAVE THE LONG TERM EFFECT OF FURTHER RESTRICTING THE VOLUME OF IMPORTS PERMITTED ENTRY. SUCH RESTRICTIONS WOULD IN OUR VIEW NOT ONLY INVOLVE AN IN-FRINGEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES' OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE GATT BUT COULD ALSO JEOPARDISE THE EFFORTS BEING MADE IN THE MTN TO LIBERALISE WORLD TRADE IN BEEF.

AUSTRALIA IS CONCERNED AT THIS SITUATION AND AT THIS POINT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD LIKE TO AGAIN RESTATE

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OUR POSITION SO THAT THERE CAN BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING.
FOR AUSTRALIA, SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS
CONNECTED WITH IMPROVING QUANTITATIVE ACCESS CONDITIONS
AND LIMITATIONS ON BEEF EXPORT SUBSIDIES ARE ESSENTIAL
FOR A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS. WE DO
NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE CONTRIBUTION THAT A MEANINGFUL
MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENT COULD MAKE TO IMPROVING THE
SITUATION FOR WORLD TRADE IN BEEF BUT A MULTILATERAL
ARRANGEMENT OF THIS NATURE COULD NOT ALONE BE CONSIDERED
SATISFACTORY. THERE MUST ALSO BE MEANINGFUL AGREEMENTS
ON ACCESS AND EXPORT SUBSIDIES. INDEED, I HAVE TO STATE
THAT IF AT THE END OF THE NEGOTIATIONS NO IMPROVEMENT
IN THE CONDITIONS FOR ACCESS AND NO REALISTIC SUBSIDY
LIMITATIONS ARE ACHIEVED, AUSTRALIA COULD NOT SEE ANY
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ISO-00 STRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
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ITC-01 TRSE-00 ICA-11 SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01 DOE-15
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BENEFIT IN BEING A PARTY TO WHAT WOULD BE A PURELY
COSMETIC MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENT. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT
WOULD NOT REPRESENT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS PRESENTLY
PLAGUING THE WORLD BEEF MARKET.

AUSTRALIA IS, OF COURSE, HOPEFUL THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS
WILL LEAD TO BOTH IMPROVED ACCESS COMMITMENTS AND A
MEANINGFUL MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENT. THE CURRENT WORKING
HYPOTHESIS NEEDS CONSIDERABLE REFINEMENT TO CLEAR UP
AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT AND TO CLARIFY AREAS WHICH REMAIN
OBSCURE. MY DELEGATION WILL HAVE A NUMBER OF COMMENTS
TO MAKE ON INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES AS WE WORK THROUGH THE
DOCUMENT. AT THIS POINT I WANT SIMPLY TO REGISTER
AUSTRALIA'S CONCERN AT THE LACK OF SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS
IN THE BILATERAL ACCESS NEGOTIATIONS AND TO MAKE CLEAR
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OUR POSITION THAT BOTH SUCCESSFUL ACCESS NEGOTIATIONS
AND SUBSIDY LIMITATIONS ARE CENTRAL TO ANY PACKAGE OF
"SOLUTIONS" FOR THE BEEF SECTOR. END TEXT.

3. DRAFTED BY DRAZEK. CULBERT

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Secure: OPEN
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Type: TE
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